

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017734

E.O. 11652: GDS:12/31/82

TAGS: PFOR, JA

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH GOJ ON CLOSE DOWN OF VOA

OKINAWA RELAY STATION(ORS)

REFERENCE: USIA 0536-C

1. SUMMARY: DEPARTMENT REQUESTS THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF EMBASSY, AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY, EXPLORE INFORMALLY WITH APPROPRIATE GOJ OFFICIALS NUMBER OF QUESTIONS AND CONTINGENCIES RELATED TO ORS TERMINATION. GOJ REACTIONS OR ANSWERS WOULD PROVIDE BASIS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS THIS SUBJECT. IT IS OUR INTENTION TO CLOSE DOWN ORS BY AGREED DATE DESPITE BUDGETARY DELAYS. OUR MAIN CONCERN IS LAND RESTORATION COST. IDEALLY, NHK OR OTHER JAPANESE ENTITY WOULD ACQUIRE ORS SITES "AS IS" AND RELEASE USG FROM COST OF RESTORATION OF PROPERTIES PRESENTLY LEASED BY VOA. USIA HOPES TO BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN NORMAL ORS OPERATIONS UNTIL MAY 15, 1977.

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HOWEVER, WE ARE WILLING TO ENTERTAIN POSSIBILITY OF EARLIER

DEPARTURE IF THIS WOULD LEAD TO SUBSTANTIAL WAIVER OF RESTORATION OBLIGATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. QUESTIONS TO BE RESOLVED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ARE: IS GOJ AWARE OF ANY INTEREST ON PART OF NHK OR OTHER JAPANESE BROADCASTERS IN SUCCEEDING VOA AS BROADCASTER USING LAND, FACILITIES PRESENTLY LEASED OR OWNED BY VOA? IF SUCH INTEREST EXISTS, WOULD GOJ ENDORSE SUCH SUCCESSION? ARE THERE OTHER POTENTIAL USERS OF ALL OR PART OF ORS SITES, PRIVATE OR GOVERNMENTAL?

3. IF NORMAL ORS OPERATIONS CONTINUE UP TO MAY 15, 1977, AND NO ARRANGEMENT IS MADE TO RELEASE SITES "AS IS", ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF APPROXIMATELY SIX MONTHS OR MORE WILL STILL BE NEEDED TO DISMANTLE SALVAGEABLE EQUIPMENT AND CARRY OUT LAND RESTORATION. ESTIMATED COSTS OF DEMOLITION OF IMBEDDED CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS, REMOVAL OF PERMANENT STRUCTURES, ETC., MAY TOTAL AS HIGH AS ONE MILLION DOLLARS, LESS ANY SALVAGE VALUE. THIS AMOUNT IS PRESENTLY UNBUDGETED. AGENCY HAS HOWEVER BUDGETED APPROXIMATELY DOLS 950,000 FOR LEGALLY REQUIRED SEVERANCE PAYMENTS TO ORS JAPANESE EMPLOYEES.

4. IF IT IS CLEAR THAT GOJ OR OTHER BROADCASTER IS NOT INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING VOA SITES, EMBASSY SHOULD ASCERTAIN WHETHER AN EARLIER CESSATION OF ORS OPERATIONS(E.G. DEC 1976) BE AN INDUCEMENT TO GOJ TO FACILITATE VOA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM OKINAWA BY ACTING AS ITS AGENT IN TERMINATING LAND LEASES IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MINIMIZE OUR RENTAL AND RESTORATION COSTS.

T. OUR OFFER OF EARLIER DEPARTURE MAY RAISE CERTAIN OTHER PROBLEMS: (A) SINCE ORS JAPANESE EMPLOYEES HAVE SUBMITTED PETITION TO DIET MEMBERS PROTESTING CLOSE DOWN OF ORS AND CALLING IN EFFECT FOR ITS CONTINUOUS OPERATION, OUR VOLUNTARY, EARLIER DEPARTURE WILL CERTAINLY COMPLICATE THEIR RELIEF AND REEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS. IF GOJ, HOWEVER, WILLING TO EXTEND SPECIAL RELIEF OR ASSISTANCE TO THESE EMPLOYEES, ISSUE MAY BE MINIMIZED. (B) FUNDING JUSTIFICATION IN CONGRESS FOR TINANG AUGMENTATION PROJECT IS RELATED TO TERMINATION OF VOA OKINAWA OPERATION, AS EMBASSY WELL AWARE. WITHOUT A FAVORABLE RESTORATION SETTLEMENT FROM GOJ, OUR EARLIER DEPARTURE COULD DAMAGE AGENCY'S CREDIBILITY WITH CONGRESS CONCERNING NEED FOR NEW CONFIDENTIAL

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FACILITIES AT TINANG. OMB ACTION IN DEFERRING START OF CONSTRUCTION HAS ALREADY DIMINISHED SOME-WHAT IMPACT OF ARGUMENT THAT TINANG PROJECT IS URGENTLY NEEDED TO REPLACE LOSS OF POWER WHEN ORS OPERATION TERMINATED.

6. IDEALLY FROM US POINT OF VIEW, GOJ WOULD FIND THAT NHK OR OTHERS ARE INTERESTED AND WILL BE PREPARED TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR VOA' LAND LEASES, ORS JAPANESE EMPLOYEES,

BROADCAST FACILITIES AND HOUSING, ALL NO EARLIER THAN MAY 15, 1977. THIS WOULD PERMIT NORMAL ORS OPERATIONS TO CONTINUE UNTIL THAT DATE, AND MINIMIZE PERIOD DURING WHICH EAST ASIAN LISTENERS WOULD ENCOUNTER ADDITIONAL DIFFICULTIES IN RECEIVING VOA BROADCASTS.

7. BECAUSE PAO MILLER'S PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENT IN VOA, WE SUGGEST HE BE INCLUDED IN EXPLORATORY TALKS WITH GOJ. DEPENDING ON GOJ REACTION, WE WOULD CONSIDER SENDING VOA REPS FOR SERIES OF TECHNICAL TALKS WITH JAPANESE ENGINEERS. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO REPORT RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

8. GUIDANCE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS HANDLING OF ISSUE IN SEPTTEL. SISCO

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## Message Attributes

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